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RADIO-READINGS

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tions, trade and consumer magazines, textbook publishers and timberland holdings. Last year brought record profits and major acquisitions for Times Mirror, and the *Times* reported the details thoroughly. Yet almost nowhere did it give readers a context in which to evaluate the company's clout or to compare its power and diversity with other multimedia conglomerates. That's the kind of information that can point out potential conflicts of interest. Only in the relatively obscure, noncontroversial textbook business did the *Times* rank its parent company against other major publishers.

No. 2. *The U.S. & Its Contra/Drug Connection* — The *Times* occasionally reported the allegations of the Christic Institute and others that supplying Reagan's "Freedom Fighters" also involved drug dealing. As to *investigating* the charges, "We dropped the ball on that," said the paper's ace political reporter, Robert Scheer, at a recent forum sponsored by FAIR. He explained that "the Christic lawsuit runs against the grain of many *Times* editors who think it's a conspiracy theory, which they don't accept in general."

No. 3. *Unreported Worldwide Nuclear Accidents* — This refers to an article in Germany's *Der Spiegel* about reactor-accident reports compiled by the International Atomic Energy Agency. The *Times* ran nothing on this.

No. 4. *Reagan's Mania for Secrecy* — Project Censored cites "a massive network of executive orders, secret directives and administrative edicts [that] institutionalized secrecy throughout the government and put unprecedented controls on information available to the public."

The *Times* has a mixed record on detailing executive-branch secrecy, which should be a major concern for a major newspaper. It covered lengthy charges from People for the American Way (PAW) that the Reagan administration exhibits a "secrecy obsession." It ran several stories on Pentagon suppression of news reports from the Persian Gulf. It editorialized against this and against overclassifying information about spy satellites. It also ran an excellent op-ed piece by the Institute for Policy Studies' Richard Barnet slamming "the most secrecy-obsessed administration in history."

But most of the *Times*' own protests were against "government" secrecy, not specifying the Reagan administration. When it did attack Reagan, it was on his avoidance of press conferences, which isn't the same thing as official secrecy. It failed to mention administration support for Richard Nixon's continued suppression of Watergate-era presidential papers and tapes. In attributing the strongest protests against "Reagan's mania for secrecy" to Barnet and People for the American Way, the *Times* apparently wants to avoid looking like a special-interest pleader.

No. 5. *George Bush's Role in the Iran Arms Deal* — Numerous *Times* articles disclosed that Bush knew and supported the arms sale to Iran. An op-ed piece by Dan Schorr suggested that Bush lied about being "out of the loop." The paper did not cover allegations that Bush "more than President Reagan promoted the Iran arms initiative," which is what Project Censored charges. There was, however, no investigation by the *Times* — despite all its resources — of the fact that George Bush headed the special anti-terrorist task force that spawned the Iran-contra team and its malfeasances, nor of the remarkable involvement of Bush's office and staff with the on-the-ground contra operation in Central America. Like the other media, the *Times* trotted along with the general whitewashing of these areas by the Iran-Contra committee, even though George Bush personally knew and had protected many of the players during his days as CIA director.

No. 6. *Biowarfare Research in University Laboratories* — The *Times* did not report allegations that "despite an international agreement which bans the development of germ-warfare agents, the Pentagon's research budget for infectious disease and toxins has increased tenfold since fiscal '81 and most of the '86 budget of $42 million went to 24 U.S. university campuses where the world's most deadly organisms are being cultured in campus labs."

No. 7. *Biased Press Coverage of the Arias Peace Plan* — Both FAIR and the San Francisco-based Media Alliance charged that most newspapers covered the peace plan from the viewpoint of Reagan's "obsession with Nicaragua." In its editorials, the *Times* has been generally critical of what it called "Reagan's simplistic and heavy-handed policies" in Central America. Although newspapers usually refrain from criticizing news coverage, the *Times* gave space for others to do so. One was Daniel Ortega, who blasted "misrepresentations that the Reagan administration disinformation campaign designed against us." Ortega also charged that "the Reagan administration tried to focus media and public attention on Nicaragua's alleged lack of compliance with the accords. Facts show otherwise." In its news reporting, however, the *Times* — as Marc Cooper persistently noted in these pages — was as biased as the rest of the media toward Nicaragua, as evidenced by almost all of Richard Bourdreaux's reporting from Managua.

No. 8. *Dumping Our Toxic Wastes on the Third World* — Excluding the Bhopal disaster, the *Times* did not investigate allegations that "exporting hazardous and toxic wastes to Third World countries is a growth industry."

No. 9. *The Censored Report of Torture in El Salvador* — The *Times* reported on state-sponsored torture in Israel, South Korea and South Africa, but not on torture "by Salvadoran police forces who are trained and occasionally supervised by American military advisors." This despite repeated appeals from local activists to the *Times* to cover such matters, as well as in the fact of detailed reporting on torture over the years in the *L.A. Weekly*. Perhaps *Times* editors assume that if a competing paper carries such reports, it need not inform its own readers.

No. 10. *Project Galileo to Carry Lethal Plutonium* — The *Times* carried a brief Associated Press story about congressional opposition to NASA launching a plutonium-powered satellite. This article rated the potential danger from the plutonium far below that alleged by Project Censored and its source, *The Nation*.

Ranking the Times

I asked two Project Censored judges from California for their opinions of the *Los Angeles Times*. Herbert I. Schiller, communications professor at U.C. San Diego, stated that "I think I get a wider account of international news and a broader view of national culture from *The New York Times*" than from the *L.A. Times*, which he rarely reads.

Ben Bagdikian thinks that the *L.A. Times* "is not as adventurous as the *Washington Post* nor as encyclopedic as *The New York Times*. It's basically no better nor worse" than other major dailies. The *L.A. Times*' strength is that it runs some "stories with greater depth" than is found in most metropolitan newspapers, he said. ■

college-educated, anti-Republican liberal, National Public Radio's Renee Montagne and Robert Siegel will first make you guilty with daily reports from Washington and the latest international hot spot, and then smooth it over with sweet-sounding segues and some of the corniest Americana fluff on the airwaves. KCRW 89.9 FM, Mon.-Fri., 4-7 p.m.; Sat.-Sun. 5-6 p.m.

TIMES IN REVIEW It may not be pretty, but it's absolutely the most comprehensive, unfiltered world report available in Los Angeles . . . for those with the political stomach. Intrepid reporter Don Rush hosts a daily diet of local, national and international reports and analysis from the kind of people who get paid to make sense out of it all. KPFK 90.7 FM, Mon.-Fri., 6-7 p.m.

AMERICAN DIALOGUES Host Robert Foxworth focuses on the uses and abuses of everything from U.S. foreign policy, to the media, to the U.S. intelligence apparatus. KPFK 90.7 FM, Fri., 3-4 p.m.

NUCLEAR CONNECTIONS The Los Angeles chapter of Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament sponsors this weekly forum that features special guests and a wide array of progressive, peace-oriented issues. KFOX 93.5 FM, Thurs., 9:30-10 a.m.

UNO DE SAL Y UNO DE PIMIENTA For those who like their Latin American news, commentary and interviews so fresh they haven't even been translated into English, tune no further. KPFK 90.7 FM, Thurs., 9-10 p.m.

—Bill Raden

READINGS

URBAN MOBILE POETS present a fund-raiser for Mozambican refugees, co-sponsored by Mozambique Support Network. Mark Colasurdo, Carolyne Mas, Mazisi Kunene and others provide poetry readings, music and entertainment. First Congregational Church, 484 E. Walnut, Pasadena; Fri., July 22, 7:30 p.m.; $3. (818) 792-1345.

BEYOND BAROQUE presents CalArts Upstairs Show and Tell: a reading, exhibition and publication party for *Revenge* magazine, co-edited by CalArts graduates Jane Rubin and Jody Zellen, both of whom read along with Richard Hawkins. Exhibitions by Catherine Opie, Michele Schtakleff, Jan Tumir and others. Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd., Venice; Fri., July 22, 8:30 p.m.; $5, $3 members & students. (213) 822 3006.

KATE BRAVERMAN, L.A. poet and novelist, reads at a publication party for her new novel, *Palm Latitudes*. The Woman's Building, 1727 N. Spring Street; Fri., July 22, 8 p.m. (213) 221-6161. Braverman also reads and signs her new work the following day at Vagabond Books, 2076 Westwood Blvd., W.L.A; Sat., July 23, 5-6:30 p.m. (213) 475-2700. And at Midnight Special Bookstore, 1350 Santa Monica Mall, S.M.; Sun., July 24, 5 p.m. (213) 393-2923.

THE FOUNDRY, the Cast Theater's ongoing series for developing new playworks, presents a reading of *Otto and Jeffrey*, written and directed by James Moriarity; Sat., July 23, 3 p.m. And *Don't Quit Your Day Job*, written and directed Dave Higgins, is read, Sun., July 24, 3 p.m. The Cast Theater, 804 N. El Centro Ave., Hlywd. (213) 462-0265.

MARKET STREET SERIES comes to a close with the Paris Review Reading. Poet/novelist Jim Harrison, author of *Legends of the Fall*, reads from his work along with an appearance by noted author George Plimpton, who hosted the first of these events in 1985. 72 Market Street, Venice; Sat., July 23, 2-4 p.m.; $30. (213) 471-3060.

THE BASEMENT Ann Aubin, Van Cromwell, Richard White and Wade Stanley are featured readers in an evening of poetry, along with limited open readings. The Methodist Church, 1226 N. Alvarado; Sat., July 23, 8 p.m. (213) 413-9111.

KAY MILLS, *L.A. Times* editorial writer and author of *A Place In the News: From the Women's Pages to the Front Page*, gives a report on women's struggles to break into the newspaper business while redefining the news and changing our society. Sisterhood Bookstore, 1351 Westwood Blvd., W.L.A.; Sun., July 24, 2-4 p.m. (213) 477-7300.

GENET BOSQUE gives a poetry reading as part of a special presentation from the Landmark Theater at First Stage, including a one-person show, *Please Don't Throw Things at Me (The Perils of a Poet Substitute Teacher)*, written and performed by R. David Stephens, directed by Damon Pennington. First United Methodist Church, 6017 Franklin Ave., Hlywd.; Sun., July 24, 5-7 p.m.; $7. (213) 850-6271.

VIDEOTAPED POETRY WORKSHOP, presented by Toltec Productions, is a part of the video anthology "Poets Go on Video." All workshop participants should bring 12 copies of a poem to read; a discussion of the poems follows the readings (please don't wear black). Douglas Park, 2439 Wilshire Blvd., S.M.; Tues., July 26, 8-10 p.m.; $1 donation. (818) 845-7766.

ELOISE KLEIN HEALY and ***CECILIA WOLOCH*** are featured readers presenting their poetry along with open readings at 7 p.m., sign-ups at 6:30 p.m. System M Cafe/Gallery, 213-A Pine Ave., Long Beach; Wed., July 27, 8 p.m.; $3. (213) 435-2525.

TAKEA and ***VICTOR NOEL***, L.A. poets, present "A Full Moon Reading in the Season of the Snake," as they read from their works. Olio, 3709 Sunset Blvd., Silver Lake; Thurs., July 28, 8:30 p.m.; $5. (213) 667-9566.

—Brian Young

Poetry

A LESSON IN LEVER

a stiff piece of
american cheese
may be used as
a lever . . .
but it's not being used that way here

GEORGE FOREMAN TALKS ABOUT GOD

God eats shit
from both sides of the table

SPIKE JONES'S COCK

a fresh apple core
with two
rough and tumble
toenail clippings
inserted
makes a my-t-good
weapon

—Richard Meltzer

From his poetry collection 17 Insects Can Die in Your Heart *(Ouija Madness Press). Reprinted by permission.*

There will be an autograph party for Richard Meltzer's new book of essays, L.A. Is the Capital of Kansas, *at Book Soup, 8818 Sunset Blvd., Fri., July 22, 6 p.m.*

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